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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02
SS-15 IO-14 HA-05 /097 W
----------089825 240159Z /73
R 231545Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8598
USINFO WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

UNCLAS ALGIERS 1594

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, PINS, MOPS, XA, CG, AG
SUBJ: ALGIERS VERSION OF EVENTS IN ZAIRE

USINFO FOR PGM/RC, PGM/P, VOA, NEA

1. SUMMARY: ALGERIAN PRESS OF PAST WEEK HAS BEEN FULL OF TENDENCIOUS REPORTING AND BITTER COMMENT ON EVENTS IN ZAIRE. ITS MAIN PREOCCUPATIONS HAVE BEEN TO DENY PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S CLAIMS OF ALGERIAN INVOLVEMENT IN SHABA AFFAIR, ATTACK MOBUTU IN RESPONSE, AND PRTRAY HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS OF WESTERN COUNTRIES AS SMOKESCREEN FOR "IMPERIALIST" DESIGNS OF SHABA AND ON AFRICA AS A WHOLE. FRANCE HAS BORNE BRUNT OF CRITICISM, BUT OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES HAVE ALSO BEEN CITED. END SUMMARY.

2. HEADLINES OF LEADING GOVERNMENT-OWNED ALGIERS DAILY IN FRENCH, "EL MOUDJAHID", DURING THIS PERIOD WELL INDICATE TENDENCIOUS SLANT
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OF ALGERIAN REPORTING. MAY 15: "KOLWEZI AND MUTSHASHA LIBERATED." MAY 16: ZAIRE GUERRILLAS MOVE NORTH. ANGOLA NOT INVOLVED IN UPRISING OF PEOPLE OF ZAIRE." MAY 17: "BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF KOLWEZI." MAY 18: "WHILE GUERRILLAS OF FNLC DOMINATE SITUATION, MENACE OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION ARISES." MAY 19/20: "WESTERN INTERVENTION IN ZAIRE." MAY 21: "WESTERN INTERVENTIONS IN AFRICA AND ALIBI OF 'SAFETY OF FOREIGN TECHNICIANS' - POPULAR UPRISING OF SHABA BROKEN

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SECOND TIME." MAY 22: "KOLWEZI TURNED OVER TO FRENCH PARAS BY MOB-
UTU." MAY 23: "NUMEROUS WITNESSES OF MASSACRE OF CIVILIANS BY FRANCO-
MOBUTIST FORCES."

3. STAGE FOR CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES BETWEEN ALGERIA AND ZAIRE
WAS SET BY MAY 15 AND 16 CIRCULAR NOTES FROM EMBASSY ZAIRE IN
ALGIERS TO FOREIGN MINISTRY AND ALL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS. MAY 15
NOTE SPOKE OF "RUSSO-CUBAN INVASION SUPPORTED BY ANGOLA AND ZAMBIA
WITH COMPLICITY OF ALGERIA AND LIBYA. INVASION PLAN, CALLED 'OPERA-
TION DOVE', WAS CONCEIVED IN HAVANA AND PERFECTED IN ALGIERS."
MAY 16 NOTE INDICATED THAT "PENDING RECEIPT OF FURTHER DETAILS FROM
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, AMBASSADOR OF ZAIRE HAS FURNISHED TO ALGERIAN
OFFICIALS TANGIBLE, IRREFUTABLE PROOF, VERIFIABLE HERE ON THE
SPOT, THAT DEMONSTRATES ACTIVE PART PLAYED BY ALGERIA IN PREPARA-
TION AND ORGANIZATION OF CURRENT WAR IN SHABA."

4. IN RESPONSE, ALGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY SUMMONED AMBASSADOR OF
ZAIRE AND AMBASSADORS OF OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES, AND FOREIGN MINI-
STER BOUTEFLIKA SENT MESSAGE TO OAU SECYGEN DENYING ZAIRE'S ACCU-
SATIONS OF AFRICAN AND EXTRA-AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT IN SHABA AND
ALLEGING IN TURN THAT "OFFENSIVE HAD BEEN LAUNCHED AGAINST CON-
TINENT BY FRENCH POLICY OF MILITARY INTERVENTION." IN SIMULTANEOUS
COMMENT, GOVERNMENT-OWNED ALGERIE PRESSE SERVICE WROTE: "MOBUTU
AFFIRMS WITHOUT RESERVE THAT SECOND SHABA WAR ... WAS CONCEIVED IN
CUBA AND ELABORATED IN ALGERIA.... ZAIRE'S AMBASSADORS IN WESTERN
CAPITALS GO SO FAR AS TO AFFIRM THAT CUBAN FIGHTERS LEAD FNLC ELE-
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MENTS, TAKING UP IN CHORUS DELIRIOUS STATEMENTS OF 'FOUNDING FATHER'
...."

5. ALGIERS PAPERS WERE QUICK TO MOUNT COUNTER-ATTACH OF THEIR
OWN. "EL MOUDJAHID" WROTE MAY 22: "GENERAL MOBUTU, WHOSE NOTOR-
IOUSLY CORRUPT REGIME HAS JUST BEEN SAVED SECOND TIME IN EXTREMIS...
THIS MAN WHO IS UNANIMOUSLY ADMITTED TO HAVE LED HIS COUNTRY TO COM-
PLETE ECONOMIC RUIN, YESTERDAY MADE GROSSLY INJURIOUS ATTACKS AGINST
ALGERIA AND ITS PRESIDENT.... ALGERIA OF COURSE CONDEMNS WESTERN
MILITARY INTERVENTION IN ZAIRE, JUST AS IT CONDEMNS ANY INTERFERENCE
IN AFFAIRS OF CONTINENT.... GENERAL MOBUTU PRETENDS TO IGNORE THIS
AND RESORTS TO INSULTS. BUT IF PEOPLE OF ZAIRE HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF
HIM, THIS TRANSPARENT MANEUVER WILL NOT PREVENT HIS FALL." ON MAY 23,
"EL MOUDJAHID" WENT FURTHER: "WE CHALLENGE GENERAL MOBUTU PUBL-
ICLY ... TO PRESENT ANY PROOF OF ANY INTERFERENCE, DIRECT OR IN-
DIRECT, OF OUR COUNTRY IN AFFAIRS OF ZAIRE, AND MORE PRECISELY IN
POPULAR UPRISING IN SHABA."

6 PAPERS ALSO ATTACKED WESTERN MOTIVES: "IT'S BEHIND SAME 'HUMANI-
TARIAN' ALIBI THAT GOVERNMENTS OF BELGIUM, FRANCE, U.S., AND U.K.
TRY TO HIDE REAL MOTIVES OF THEIR MILITARY INTERVENTIONS. IN FACT,
WESTERN POWERS HAVE TAKEN DECISION TO SEND TROOPS TO SHABA FOR ONE

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PURPOSE -- TO TRY AND STOP OFFENSIVE OF FNLC TROOPS." (MAY 19/20 "EL MOUDJAHID"). "WHAT MATTERS FOR FORCES OF COLONIALISM AND IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA IS NOT RESCUE OF THEIR CITIZENS, IT IS NATURAL RESOURCES.... ALL THESE MATERIALS CONSTITUTE BACKBONE OF EUROPE'S INDUSTRIAL RENAISSANCE." (GOVERNMENT-OWNED ALGIERS DAILY IN ARABIC "ASH-SHA'B" MAY 20). STEPHAN

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Disposition Event:
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